REASONS

Humbly offered in Justification of the Action, of letting a Room in *London*-House unto certain peaceable Christians, called ANABAPTISTS.

I Doubt not but very many will bear me witness, how much and often I appeared and gave my opinion (some years together by-past) for *bearing* and *forbearing* amongst Christians; *and as* for an Endeavor by *all means* to *attain* and *maintain* a holy *Union* and *Communion in Spirit*, and Christian Practise, *(wherein how much rather would I be imployed then in any thing of more dividing tendency:)*

So also in order *unto*, and as a small *branch of* the *former*, to give toleration (if I shall so call it) *viz. Common priviledg*, room and countenance *unto all Christians* and *Societies* that are of *peaceable deportment*, and that hold the *Fundamentals* of *true* Christian Religion, *(and practise accordingly,) although erroneous in many things*, but not for any countenance, no *nor sufferance* of *error*, only for *necessity*, *lest we pluck up the good corn also*, Mat. 13.

But my *brethren* of *different opinion*, then still urged me for a Rule, *how far that toleration* should *extend*; for *said they*, generals may be pretended to extend *exceedingly too far*: And although I thought not of making *this* the *particular Case*, when first it came in question, *yet* indeed seeing I know not that *that* question hath yet been determined *amongst us*, I apprehending my self *bound* both by *Covenant*, as by *Baptism* and *Christian Profession*; to seek and endeavor after *Union with Brethren*, in [illegible] with all *sound in the*

Faith; seeing it *now* providentially is in question, *I desire* (conceiving it my Christian duty) to bring it to *such a Result* as may at least satisfie my self in my *own spirit*, if not also the spirits of others, in the point.

And conceiving this a very fit *season* and *opportunity* for the obtaining thereof; I *humbly conceive* I ought not to imbrace that *(otherwise good)* motion, which was made by, *I suppose*, a Lover of *Peace*, viz. *to wave the question, and convert the Room*, in question, *to other use*, in accommodation with the spirits of *brethren that take offence*; which I suppose I shall make haste *to do* (to avoyd the offence of the weak) *if it shall be desired*; when once the *question* is so *stated* and *determined*, That *Gods precious Truth*, and the *Freedom* of *Christian Brethren*, and *Christian Practise*, may not suffer thereby.

REASONS humbly offered, &c.

UPon the matter in question; *Whether I* (being admitted an Elder into the first Classis, usually meeting at the Black-Fryers, *London*) *did not sin, and come under just reproof, in letting of a Room in London-House*; which stood voyd, unimproved, and *which I had the letting of, although for another Interest*, and not in the least for my self.

Which Room, at the request, and for the accommodation of Mr *Jesse*, Mr *Kissin*, and others, whom I conceive to be truly godly, (but dissenting in the point of baptizing of Infants, and I suppose in the manner of Church-Government, *and it may be in some others*) *I did let to Mr Tomlins for two moneths*, with this condition, That it should be employed to no use but what was good and laudable, and without any annoyance; and if in the proof I should find any just exception, I might demand it at the two moneths end, or at any time give warning, and within such a time it should be surrendred.

Upon the question, Whether or no I did not sin in this action, in that I did then suppose that the persons abovesaid would there exercise Religion, and might in reason conceive, and could not but think, That *that* principle that engaged them to dissent, would engage them, as they conceived occasion required, to preach their said dissenting Points

Or whether I had, or have [illegible] Scripture Warrant [illegible]

First, I humbly desire to *premise* as followeth:

First, That the question was not (in our last debate) *Whether weak brethren of the way that I own* (*viz.* Consociation and Subordination of Churches) *do not take offence at what I have done; And what I ought now to do in reference thereunto*, (though such a motion indeed at last was made, *viz.* to lay aside the question, and to put them out upon that account,) *which I conceive I may not, until the point in question is cleared*, lest I therein do against the Truth.

Secondly, Nor the question debated, or to be debated, was not, *Whether* they *have there driven a design rather to advance those* particular Points *wherein they differ from us*, then to advance the propagation of the Gospel unto all; and in special unto *such* who through weakness and prejudice (as I conceive, like that which was in those of the Circumcision towards those of the uncircumcision) are not so likely to receive it from others (*peradventure more able*) as from such as themselves.

The former of which, if they shall appear to do, *and resolve to prosecute*, (the contrary whereof yet appeared those three, four, or five times that I heard them,) *I shall then hold my self bound to out them.*

Thirdly, Nor the question was not; *how far they miscarried in admitting a dispute with a notable corrupt disturber*, who thrust in among them, and necessitated them (as they conceive) to prove by Argum.nts *the Divinity of the Scriptures*, which he would not grant, but most sinfully denyed it: *by which publique account of theirs*, they say, they procured their future quiet from the disturber, and no small satisfaction to the better affected.

But although this gave me some satisfaction; *yet I shall desire them* to give it more full and large to the satisfaction of *all*; and I hereby promise, that if they shall *willingly* admit any Disputes of that nature, not being *forced thereunto* (to avoyd sinful silence) I shall then hold my self engaged to out them.

Fourthly, Nor the question was not, *Whether I might let them a room for the end, and be furthering to them in the means of propagating of Errors*, it being out of question I may not.

Fifthly, *Nor whether I might do as much for Error, as I might do for Truth*; seeing I may do nothing for Error, but all for Truth.

21

But the question being at the first, *as is above set forth*, I prepared and presented an Answer in writing *in substance*, as followeth in *page* 7. wherein I conceive is abundantly proved, that we *not only may*, but *ought* to *receive*, *own*, *encourage*, *commend*, and *praise God for*; and sure then may give Toleration, or let an house for money unto *such persons* or societies whose judgment and practise *are in the main answerable to the Fundamentals of Christian Faith and Practise*: Although erronious in part, both in Doctrine and Discipline, both in Judgment and Practise.

But after some debate upon some particulars, concerning *owning*; *receiving*, and *countenancing Christians*, erring both in *Doctrine* and *Discipline*, we at the last arrived at *this Issue*; and this was given in by my greatly honoured *Christian Friends* for the state of the question, *viz.*

Whether in doing as above I did not clearly do all I did *in compliance with them* for the propagation of Error, *which they affirmed I did*; for that (besides what is above expressed) *say they*, These men carryed all the truth *they have* with them, when they went out *from us*, (which is our glory,) and have no need to leave *us* and our *Congregation* for Truths sake, *but for Errors sake*, and had no need to hire a room *of you* for *Truths sake*, nor for the propagation of *Truth*, which is sufficiently maintained and held out among *us*, but only for their Error, which occasioned them to leave our Assemblies; and *consequently* for *that only*, and to countenance and further them in *that* (say they) have you let them a room, *what ever you intended.*

And so indeed this action of mine being clearly of the nature of *Toleration*, for without my sufferance *they could not come in*, nor continue there.

The question *now is*, Whether in admitting and suffering them there, I do not properly suffer, *tolerate*, and *countenance* them *in the propagation of Error*, (which I do, if they assert truly) *from which thou O Lord deliver thy poor servant.*

Unto which I answer.

First, As my much Reverend Friends have stated the question, *their conclusion thereupon* falls as foul upon our godly Independent Brethren *(agreed by themselves to be tolerated)* or any other dissenters, *as it doth upon these*; and denies *all Toleration whatsoever.* But,

Secondly,

Secondly, The *foundation* of their Argument, *upon which they build, is indeed an Error* (*then* by them propagated) as may thus appear.

1. If by *us* you mean all Christians in our *English Universe*, then ye say nothing, for in that sence they are of you still, *and you of them*, and are *vertually one*, though formally divided: *In that sence* they as well may say it of you, as you of them.

But by *us*, I suppose ye mean *us*, as reformed and *Presbyterian*. For as *unreformed* ye cannot say it, *ye know how much Error ye have cast out*: And as *reformed* you and *all* men know, *they* had not *all from us*, rather we from them, *some of our Reformation*: As for *Episcopacy* and *stinted Liturgy*, and some *other Errors* ye know *these* and *others*, upon whom *your assertion falls alike foul*, cast off and *damned them*; and even to persecution *asserted the contrary truth*, before ever any of *our* Assemblies durst appear in it. You know *these* and *those* helped well to break the *ice* in *England for us*, and were of the *forwardest*; and this is as evident as the day. *I'le not hold a candle to the Sun*: I'le only *remember you*, that it's not very strange that such should a little *over-do*.

2. Can our *Presbyterian Reformers* assert our *Reformation* so perfect, as that we have *all* truth now held, and *published among us*, and that *sufficiently*, and no error with it; In truth I am not so perswaded:

But that our *Way is as the light that shineth more and more*, &c. And that we yet *retain some errors*, even in *some particulars*, wherein *these Brethren* differ with us.

3. But had we as much of Truth as *James*, and *Paul*, and *all the Elders*, Acts 21.17,18,20,25. with *all the Churches* of the *uncircumcision*, with whom they held Truth against the Errors of those of the *Circumcision*, Acts 15. and *Gal.* 2. & 3. Chap. Yet, *have we publishers* in such abundance? that we should *forbid*, and *not tolerate*, or at least not further *our brethren* that hold and publish truth (*in the main*) together *with us*, although erronious in part (*as those of the Circumcision were.*) Or may we not (with *Paul*, *Phil.*1.18.) *rejoyce that Christ is preached* by such as are *sincere and faithful*, though in part erroneous, *as none will imagine but those pretenders* (and peradventure those that preached out of love also) *were*, who preached in opposition to *Paul*, and *other good*

Preachers, Verſ. 12. *to* 18. *Are not our faithful Publiſhers few?* and is not ſcarcity our great and grounded complaint?

But ſuppoſe we held as much of Truth, *which I believe none will aſſert*; and our Publiſhers were as *many*, as *able*, *active* and *faithful* as theirs at that time, *Acts* 15. & 21. Chap: *yet your inference holds not*, nor would it follow that my ſufferance of them is a furtherance *of*, or a doing any thing *for* Error, *no more* then in the caſe of the *tares*, Mat. 13. *leſt ye pluck up the good corn alſo.*

Nor that my countenancing *them*, and accommodating their occaſions with a room *is a countenancing and furthering of Error:* Or that I did or do any thing *properly* for *Error*; much leſs will it follow, that their only occaſion is *for Error*; nor that *that occaſion only* they ſeek to ſupply; nor that I, concurring with them, *do ſerve.*

As *for certain it will not follow*, That *James*, *Paul*, and the *Elders* (*Acts* 21.) did countenance and further *Error*, or do any thing *properly for Error*, or for Errors ſake. In their giving ſufferance of room and place, *without imputing ſin, to the ſufferers* (as ye do to me) and *not only ſo*, but *countenance* and *good eſteem* unto the *ſuffered*; yea, and did *that*; for the *obtaining* and *continuance* of their *good opinion*, *love* and *concord*, and their approbation of the *Elders* in the *receiving* of *Paul*, which they neither *would* nor *ought to have done*, but in condeſcenſion to thoſe *weak brethren of the Circumciſion*; erroneous *as well* in point of *Seperation*, Gal. 2. *as* among other legal points, in *Circumciſion alſo*, which anſwereth to *Baptiſm*; wherein they were too ſtiff in their miſ-underſtanding, *as theſe*, and peradventure *our ſelves* are too prone to be.

And for *certain* it will not follow, *that our bleſſed Saviour* did further them in the *means*, or advance the *end* of propagation of *Error*, in giving his countenance and commiſſion *to thoſe* whom he knew for the preſent *to be erronious*, and that in the *great doctrine* of *Chriſt crucified*, and otherways *alſo*, as *Mat.* 16. 22, 23. *Luk.* 9. 22, 44, 45. & 17. 25. compared with *Luk.* 24, 20, 21. and as *Mark* 9. 38. and *Acts* 1. 6. nor in giving *field room* to the *tares* for the *good corns ſake*, and commanding that they ſhould *not be pulled up*, leaſt they ſhould *pluck up the good corn alſo*, as above.

It is health and nouriſhment I feed and advance in feeding and accom-

accommodating a diſeaſed man; but intend not to feed his diſeaſe *So here*, and ſo in *Mat.*13.28,29.

The enſuing Arguments are in ſubſtance the ſame which I preſented in writing the time before mentioned, pag. 4.

The Crime charged before that, being; that I received them to houſe, and countenancing or furthering them, as above, I tranſgreſſed the Rule, 2 *Joh.*10.

1. *Whoſo is ſtrong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak*, and to *receive one another according to Chriſt Jeſus*, Rev.15.1,7. who miniſtred to perſons and ſocieties of the *Circumciſion*, as well as of the *uncircumciſion*, Verſ.8,9. *to* 12. So did his Apoſtles, *Acts* 10.15. and 21 Chap. *though ſo divided* about *meats* and *days*, Rom. 14. and about *Circumciſion*, Acts 15. and other Legallities, *Acts* 21. Unto *all which*, and all other *externals in Religion*, the Apoſtle *oppoſes* the *new creature*, Gal. 6.15. *Faith working by love*, Gal. 5.6. and *Righteouſneſs, Peace and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt*, Rom. 14.17,18. *Phil.*3.3. and therefore preſſeth a *purſuance of peace*, and *ſuch holy edifying*, Verſ.19. and to avoyd *cenſuring of one another*, Verſ.13. and *that with one mind, and one mouth*, (that difference notwithſtanding) they ſhould *glorifie God*, Chap. 15.6. and *receive one another, as Chriſt received us to the glory of God*, Verſ.7.

But *Chriſt Jeſus* received us, *whiles as bad as thoſe in queſtion, (or our ſelves now are)* to *Union* and *Communion* with *himſelf*, and with his *Saints*; which is the *greater* grace, countenance and accommodation; and *includes the leſs*, (of Civil or Moral.)

Ergo, we and *they* are bound, not only to acknowledg *Union*, and to receive one another to *Civil* and *Moral Communion*, grace, countenance and accommodation, *which is the leſs*, but alſo to *the moſt ſacred*, which is the greater.

If therefore *it be our ſin*, thus againſt our duty to *cry*, and endeavor to *argue down* the leſs, *which we are bound to give to perſons or ſocieties for Moral or Civil ends*, (*they being ſuch in the main*) how much greater is *our* and *their ſin*, in arguing and acting *as we do*, in oppoſition to the *religious part* of our duty, *which is ſo much the greater*, and includes the leſs.

Argum.

Argum. 2. Every company of true Believers, in any place *assembled in Christs Name*, have his presence, *Mat.* 18. 20. *to record his Name, and bless them*, Exod. 20. 24. *are the Temple of God*, and have *his Spirit*, 1 *Cor.* 3. 16. considered with the whole Chapter.

Therefore to *receive such*, and give them sufferance, *place* and *countenance*, is to receive *Jesus Christ*, Mat. 10. 40.

Argum. 3. It is our duty *to walk together*, or *by the same Rule*; so far as we are come, or *in that whereunto we have attained*, waiting till *God shall reveal* that wherein we differ, *Phil.* 3. 16, 15.

Therefore it's our duty to further *all* in *all such walking*:

But *we* & *they* are come *thus far*, as to agree in *Fundamentals*, and to *resolve* and endeavor to *propagate* unto *all*, those *Fundamentals of the Faith of Jesus Christ*; and although too too much divided (and apart from each other, yet) *in Assemblies of Saints* publiquely to *edifie Believers in that Faith.*

Therefore it is our duty *as to walk with thes herein*, waiting till *God shall reveal* that wherein we differ; *so also* to *further* them in the *means* to that *end*; which cannot be (as *their judgments* and *ours* yet stand *corrupted herein*) without room apart from each other.

IV. We are to *walk* as we have *holy Paul for an ensample*, *Phil.* 3. 17. whose conversation *vers.* 20. was according to his doctrine, *Gal.* 5. 6. and 6. 15. *Rom.* 14. 16. *Phil.* 3. 3. *viz.* slighting all *externals* and *formalities* in *Religion*, in comparison with the *essentials*; and who *owned*, *countenanced*, and *furthered* with all accommodations (*within his power*) all that were found in the Essentials, 1 *Cor.* 9. 19, 20, 22.

V. Saint *Paul rejoyced* when Christ was preached, *Phil.* 1. 18. although in opposition to *Paul*, and other good Preachers.

But Christ is preached by these.

Therefore

VI. Our Saviour, *Mark* 9. 39. reproves those that discouraged such as *acted in Christs Name*, for refusing formally to be of *their Company*, Vers. 38.

And his reason was, because *such* could not likely speak evil of him, but on his part.

And who so shall do any thing for Christ as for him, must be rewarded, Vers. 39, 40, 41. (*and can our reward be less then sufferance*